9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

888 The old people, the survivors, had not expected to outlive
764 their children and grandchildren, and then they had to bury
731 them; they had scooped shallow graves for them and had placed their bodies inside, then had covered the graves with branches. The old people had then lived by the graves for months to mourn and to protect the corpses from marauding animals. It had been a ghastly season, a season of carnage, and the old people did not like to think about it even now. We watched their sad faces when they spoke of it and saw that these old people themselves felt death very near, foreseeing the day when Gai would leave them, when the melons would dry, when they would starve.

Suddenly, unnoticed into the midst of this discussion came the baby Nhwakwe, having been awakened by the voices, his eyes still filled with sleep, to put an empty vegetable husk on the head of his grandmother, Dasina. She was too de-
● [158] pressed to notice, though, and presently the husk fell off and Nhwakwe stumbled back to his sleeping-place, secure between his father and his mother, as though perhaps he had not fully awakened at all.

888 Dasina was speaking. She said again: "To die is bad, but
761 in the end we all die anyway," and Ukwane said he did not expect to live another season. Then he asked us when we would have to leave. We told him that we were leaving in a very few days, and he said he was sorry to hear it, but if we liked he would come back to our country with us to tell us everything he knew about the customs of the Gikwe. We told
609 him sadly that this would not be possible, and he said that in that case he would live out his life beside our track, waiting for the day when we would return. We told him not to do even that, for European farmers would surely follow our tracks into the desert looking for Bushmen to take as servants.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

lap and looked drowsily at her father. "Ehe," said Toma, pointing at her, pleased that she still remembered her European name.

The talk returned to food and hunting and Toma remembered an eland the people had eaten which Short Kwi had killed, and this reminded everyone of the puff-adder bite, and Gao Feet, who had seen Short Kwi, began to describe the wound. He stammered and repeated whole phrases again and again, but finally he finished and those who had not seen Short Kwi drew in their breath and seemed very depressed. Short Kwi had been sick a year and had not died, but the flesh had gone from the calf of his leg, said Gao, the skin had gone from his foot, his foot was curled and the bones were showing. The wound stank, too, said Gao, and at this Tu said she didn't think she could bear to see him. Her children were asleep around her and she looked very sad, but by now all the faces lit by the fire were depressed and sad, and soon after that people began to go home, carrying their sleeping children. The night was almost over, the Southern Cross lay on its side and the Firewood Star was high over our heads. Last to leave was the old woman, Dikai's mother, who got stiffly to her feet and waved good-night to us.

"Good night, Old Grandmother," I said.

She turned her head to face me. "You should call me Mother. I embraced you when you came," she said.

Quite far away a fire at the werf flared up, the center point between two tall trees whose branches formed a delicate, pointed arch lit from below, showing the fire's brown owner sitting with his back to us, his elbows on his knees, perhaps gazing into the flames. It was Crooked Kwi, and he seemed very small beneath the high trees but very bright in the firelight and, somehow, very important. In a moment his wife walked into the firelight and sat beside him and they sat to-

626 horror to a !Kung! The worst dream might be to see the fires flickering in the *werft* at midnight and be unable to go to them. All the people we knew could tell us of only one time when such a departure from the group occurred: and the man had gone insane, had murdered and then run raving into the veld. There he had lived for a little while in a hole, then died.

● [158]

622 It is in connection with the need to live widely spread over the land that the !Kung headman's functions 423 are peculiar. There is one essential qualification to headmanship, in addition to heredity. A headman cannot leave his waterhole to join another

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

776 /GAUWA's *Dwelling and Appearance*

//Gauwa lives in the western sky at the place where the sun sets. (Cf. *//Gaunab* of the Hottentots living in a black sky and *Tsui //Goab* in a red sky, p. 239.) /Ti/kay said more than once that the lesser god lived in the east. That was what he remembered being told by the old people, he claimed. The other informants agreed, however, in many different interviews, that it was the other way, that the lesser god lived in the west, so I take that to be their current belief.

Some believe that *//Gauwa* first lived in a hole, */gu*. He made the hole, one informant told us, by pushing the earth out with his head. The hole was like a spring-hare hole, but very big. There were two entrances; one faced toward the sunrise, one faced toward the sunset. *//Gauwa* later made a house (*choo*). The house is tied together with wire and has poles made of iron. The house stands in a flat open space. It is built up off the ground, upon the iron poles which are stuck into the ground and rise up into the air. Informants said that ' when a person is sick with sore throat, the sickness [753 has been caused by those irons which stick into the air. If *//Gauwa* does not like a 756] person he can hurt him with those irons. The " old man " (*≠Gao/na*) tells him the way he must hurt a person.' When the medicine men are in trance they go to that house. This is how they know what it is like. They go up by a cord which hangs down from the sky. (Cf. Lebzelter's account of the Eastern Kung who believe that *//Gaunb* moves between heaven and earth on cords.)[1]

There are two trees near *//Gauwa*'s house. They have names. Nothing else on the earth or in the sky bears those names, one informant told us. The name of the tree which is towards the north with respect to the other is */Gaie*; the one towards the south is named */Dus*. The names mean nothing; they are ' just names '. */Gaie* and */Dus* have smooth bark and large white flowers, no thorns, no nuts. I thought they might be like baobabs which have these characteristics, but they are not. They are more nearly like the camelthorn (which incidentally has two names, */gi* ' a respect name ' and */aus* ' a rough name ') but are not exactly like any tree on earth.

776 The medicine men see *//Gauwa*. Only a very big medicine man, full of the power 756 which *≠Gao/na* had put into him, might see *≠Gao/na* himself, as we learned, but any of the medicine men can see *//Gauwa*. /Ti/kay thought that because *//Gauwa* was so [787] often sent by *≠Gao/na* as his messenger the medicine men all become familiar with him. Anyone may see *//Gauwa* in dreams.

The image of *//Gauwa* varies. The present image accords with tradition in some aspects. Whereas *≠Gao/na* is ' the tallest of the Bushmen ', *//Gauwa* is short. He has the form of a man, and the colour yellow is associated with him (similar characteristics to those of Lebzelter's little yellow mannikins with thick bellies, the *dau*).[2] But individuals have their own interpretations. I am convinced that some of the [158] medicine men, Gao Medicine for one, really believe that they do see *//Gauwa*. They see in the shadows among the trees and bushes objects which they interpret to be *//Gauwa*, or they see the light of the veld fires between the branches, or some such phenomenon, or they have visions or hallucinations, perhaps while in trance. Some perhaps just imagine a form.

Demi, a medicine man in Band 12, saw *//Gauwa* the night of the great dance at

[1] Schapera, op. cit., p. 188. [2] Ibid.